# Review Article: Defending Shame

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**Abstract**:

I provide an overview of the excellent account of shame presented in Deonna’s, Rodogno’s and Teroni’s recent book, *In Defense of Shame*, raise a concern with their insistence that shame always involves autonomous values, and mention two contemporary issues for which their account is relevant.

**Keywords**: shame, moral psychology, autonomy, value, guilt, inequality, conscience

Julien A. Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno & Fabrice Teroni, *In Defense of Shame: the Faces of an Emotion*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 288 pages. ISBN: 9780199793532 (hbk.) Hardback: $55.00

To illustrate the account presented in *In Defense of Shame*, allow me to begin with a personal anecdote:

*Value*: I was living in Brixton, London, with my partner. We had very little money to live on. To optimise our spending on food, we shopped at the big market in Brixton and also at two supermarket chains, one I will call ‘Value’ and one I will call ‘Mainstream’, for obvious reasons. One day, I took a dried fruit mix I had bought in Value into the office where I worked. I offered it to my colleagues who all found it really tasty. Someone asked me where I had bought it. I felt myself getting hot and red and felt put on the spot. I did not want to reveal to them that I shopped at Value, so I lied and told them I had bought the mix at Mainstream. I immediately regretted the lie, but it was out.

When I got home to my partner, I told him about my lie. He laughed at me and also chided me gently. I felt awful about what my action revealed about me.

There are two relevant emotional episodes in *Value*. The first is the emotion that prompted my lie; we will call this *office*. The second is the emotion that I felt when I recounted the episode to my partner at home; we will call this *home*.

Going on my description of how I felt, should we class *office* or *home* as shame? What criteria lead us to classify an emotional episode as shame rather than guilt, embarrassment, humiliation or self-disappointment? This is a complex question and it is one that Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno and Fabrice Teroni (hereafter DRT) seek to answer with their comprehensive analysis of shame. They have written a rich resource for philosophers, psychologists and other researchers interested in shame as an emotion. They discuss an impressive variety of philosophical treatments of shame in addition to a wealth of empirical literature, helpfully bringing together many strands of research that often remain unconnected.

Part of the monograph is devoted to repudiating what DRT refer to as two ‘dogmas’ about shame that are pervasive in the philosophical and psychological literature. The dogmas present shame, at best, as morally irrelevant and, at worst, as morally bad. DRT’s account of shame defends its moral relevance and value. After an introductory chapter, the first two chapters describe the two dogmas and the arguments and evidence that lie behind them in a charitable way. DRT explain their account of shame in detail in the following two chapters, contrasting it with other contemporary philosophical accounts and demonstrating that it is consistent with the empirical literature on shame. They use the next two chapters to revisit the dogmas, showing how their analysis of shame recognises what is correct about the dogmas while ultimately repudiating them. They end in the final two chapters by discussing some implications of their account of shame for theories of punishment and for the relationship between the law and shame. I offer an overview of DRT’s account and discuss how they would classify my two emotional episodes in *Value* in section 1. In section 2, I raise a concern about the way DRT conceive of the autonomy of shame. In the concluding remarks, I mention two contemporary issues that would benefit from the application of DRT’s analysis.

### 1. The defence of shame

The authors define shame as follows:

*In shame, we apprehend a trait or action of ours that we take to exemplify the polar opposite of a self-relevant value as indicating our incapacity to exemplify this self-relevant value even to a minimal degree.* (p. 102)

If we apply this definition to *Value*, both my emotional episodes could be classed as shame. In *office*, we could say I feel ashamed when asked by my colleague where I bought the dried fruit mix because one of my self-relevant values is my reputation among my colleagues. I feel unable to exemplify the most basic standard qualifying me for a good reputation among my colleagues, a standard that involves the possession of sufficient social status (enabled by money) to shun discount supermarkets. Rightly or wrongly, I suppose that they will look down on me if I reveal that I bought the dried fruit mix in a discount supermarket and I care about my reputation among them to some extent.

However, my reputation is not something I would count among my central values. One feature of DRT’s account that they are at pains to emphasise is that the self-relevant value involved in shame does not need to be a value that is central to one’s life; it can be a value that is peripheral to one’s core commitments. This is one of the principal differences between DRT’s account of shame and the influential view of Gabriele Taylor,[[1]](#footnote-1) as they discuss in Chapter 3. While Taylor claims that shame threatens one’s integrity, understood as adherence to one’s central commitments, DRT propose that there are also cases of ‘peripheral’ shame.[[2]](#footnote-2) These are cases where we are unable to live up to a self-relevant value that is in no way self-defining (pp. 93-97). *Office* could be a case of peripheral shame on their account.

But there is another interpretation of *office* available on DRT’s account. The authors are careful to distinguish between shame and other closely related emotions, such as guilt, feelings of humiliation, self-disappointment and embarrassment (pp. 114-8). On their account, it could be embarrassment rather than shame that I feel in *office* and they admit that it is often difficult to categorise an episode as clearly one or the other. The differences they highlight between shame and embarrassment are that embarrassment is always felt in the presence of others, whereas shame can be felt without an audience, and that embarrassment concerns appearances or projected images exclusively, while shame concerns how a person is. Whether *office* counts as shame or embarrassment will thus depend on a complex analysis of my feelings and thoughts. If I am merely worried that I will *appear* low status, but not worried that my colleagues will actually think that I *am* low status, the emotion I feel is embarrassment. If I fear that I am actually damaging my good reputation among them as a person of equal status and I care about my reputation, the emotion is shame. DRT note that one can alternate between shame and embarrassment within one emotional episode, which may be what happened to me in *office* (pp. 115-7).

In contrast, *home*, when I recount the episode to my partner, involves the failure to live up to a value that is more important and central to me, the value of standing up for one’s beliefs and not bowing to peer pressure. I am ashamed of my lie because it shows that I am unable to exemplify this kind of moral autonomy. I consider judging a person by where she shops and thus, indirectly, by how much money she spends, morally repugnant. Yet I fail to uphold this moral view when I am asked where I bought my dried fruit mix. I give in to a more peripheral concern with my reputation among my colleagues instead of showing the moral strength to admit to where I shop. *Home* is also a kind of meta-shame because it is shame *about* my first instance of shame. DRT do not discuss meta-emotions, or emotions about emotions, but we will return to themin the next section when we consider Adam Morton’s account of shame.

Discussion of *Value* demonstrates that DRT’s account of shame is neutral with regards to the values it involves. While many other accounts of shame tie it to particular values, such as self-respect or privacy, DRT claim that it can arise with respect to anyvalue to which the subject is attached and wishes to exemplify (pp. 118-122). These can be superficial values, such as the concern for my reputation displayed in *office*, or morally weighty values, such as my commitment to moral autonomy in *home*. DRT argue that whether an instance of or disposition to feel shame is morally valuable depends very much on the values at stake:

*We should distinguish between those cases in which it has to do with the subject’s autonomous perception that he has acted against a moral value – as when he feels shame for having behaved dishonestly – and those in which it does not – as when he feel shame for his reputation, invasions of his privacy, or any other morally irrelevant consideration.* (p. 131)

This brings us to their rejection of the two dogmas about shame that they describe in Chapters 1 and 2:

1. Shame is a social emotion.
2. Shame is an ugly emotion.

DRT claim that the first dogma is widespread in philosophical and scientific literature and among the public at large. The social conceptions of shame they discuss involve the subject having external standards imposed upon her, or being concerned with her public image, or considering some kind of external perspective on herself. They argue that these conceptions of shame, particularly the first two, tend to lead to a view of shame as morally irrelevant, or as only derivatively morally relevant (Chapter 1).

Against the first dogma, they argue in Chapter 5 that the ways in which shame is social are not as threatening to its moral relevance as they appear. Firstly, they concede that shame is social when the self-relevant values involved are reputation (as in *office*) and privacy and that this may make it morally irrelevant in these cases. However, reputation and privacy are but two among many values that can occasion shame; the fact that we might consider them morally irrelevant does not impugn shame in general (pp. 133-145). Secondly, the authors accept that the developmental path of shame is social, as it is for most emotions, but argue that this does not make shame itself social in a philosophically interesting way (pp. 152-153). Thirdly, they agree that shame is often a response to others’ attitudes towards us, but argue that it is nonetheless autonomous because some self-relevant value must be at stake for us to feel shame (pp. 127-133). We will look more closely at their arguments to this effect in section 2. For the present, let us note that DRT’s conception of shame is subtle enough to account for the social aspects of shame while resisting the claim that these aspects render it a morally irrelevant emotion.

The second dogma, that shame is an ugly emotion, outlined by the authors in Chapter 2, is fuelled by some particular strands of empirical work on shame. DRT are familiar with different empirical treatments of shame and related emotions and offer useful insights into their interpretation. A recent body psychological work on shame, often contrasting it with guilt, has uncovered anti-social action tendencies associated with shame, such as hiding, a lack of empathy towards others and anger and aggression. Further studies show that those who are prone to shame are also prone to depression (pp. 42-57).[[3]](#footnote-3) In addition, recent evolutionary perspectives on shame draw on the evidence from psychology about the anti-social tendencies associated with shame to argue that it is a maladaptive emotion. On this evolutionary picture, shame once served humans as a way of warning and protecting them from social threats, but is no longer fitness-enhancing in current human societies (pp. 58-66).[[4]](#footnote-4)

As DRT point out, psychologists tend to limit themselves to describing reactions such as anger and aggression towards others as ‘anti-social’, but philosophers would be less shy to say that this constitutes morally bad behaviour (p.43). The second dogma thus paints shame in an even worse light than the first, claiming that it is an emotion associated with morally dubious action tendencies and highlighting how it fares unfavourably in comparison with guilt. DRT tackle this dogma in Chapter 6, where they claim that the psychological evidence is misleading because the researchers fail to make three important distinctions: the first is the difference between *shame* and *shaming*; the second distinguishes between a *sense of shame*, and *shame-proneness*; the third separates *short-* and *long-term action tendencies* (p. 155).

The authors use the first distinction to argue that much of the empirical work on shame shows a correlation between shaming, resulting in feelings of humiliation, and anger, rather than between shame and anger. On their account, feelings of humiliation are different from shame because they typically involve feeling undeservedly demeaned in public and do not focus on a value that is necessarily important to the subject. The intentions and the size of the public matter to feelings of humiliation in a way that they do not to shame. For instance, it would have been humiliation that I felt in *office* rather than (or in addition to) shame if one of my colleagues had recognised that the dried fruit mix was from Valueand had taunted me about it. The authors argue that episodes described as ‘shaming’ often provoke feelings of humiliation rather than shame, a point which is important for their discussion of ‘shaming’ punishments in Chapter 7. They also point out that the tool used by psychologists to measure shame and guilt, which is a self-report test, is biased in favour of guilt and against shame because it tends to register kinds of shame that are connected with low self-esteem (pp. 156-163).

The criticisms of empirical work are made in a fair spirit and exemplify a model way for philosophers to make use of empirical research. DRT make some helpful and constructive points that will enable future empirical research to obtain more finely-tuned results relating to shame. The distinction they make between a sense of shame and shame-proneness is important for the literature. They emphasise the fact that subjects who are classified as shame-prone on self-report tests tend to be those who are disposed to feel irrational shame. Irrational shame, which they discuss in detail in Chapter 4, comes in three types for the authors, involving: 1) a systematic bias in assessments of situations; 2) setting the threshold for eliciting shame too high; 3) feeling shame for unalterable traits. They argue that many of the problematic action tendencies associated with shame-proneness are actually associated with a disposition to feel irrational shame, which one can develop for different reasons (pp. 163-169). The authors also show that an evolutionary account of shame need not paint shame as destructive provided it is not based on the erroneous conclusions of the psychological evidence linking shame to aggression, hiding and depression. In fact, one prominent evolutionary account of shame sees it in a positive light (pp. 169-173).[[5]](#footnote-5)

In building a positive account of shame as a moral emotion, DRT appeal to the difference between the actions an episode of shame may lead to in the short term and those that it may promote in the long term. For instance, in *home*, I felt so ashamed in front of my partner that I wanted to hide myself away, or at least change the subject, but the long term effects were quite different. In the long term, I reflected on the episode and have tried to reform myself. In particular, I have tried to avoid feeling shame about myself in this way by becoming stronger in the face of peer pressure to demonstrate social status, particularly where this is equated with having money. The authors’ notion of a sense of shame is important here because it involves more than a disposition to feel shame; it involves thoughts about what might occasion shame in one and dispositions to behave in ways that will prevent one from feeling shame. This is what makes shame a potentially morally good emotion, the authors argue. Feeling shame, or prospectively imagining that one might feel it, is a motor for self-reform and for behaviour that upholds one’s values (pp. 175-179).

Furthermore, the lack of empathy supposedly correlated with shame can also be explained by focusing on the long term and on the distinction between shame-proneness and a sense of shame. Those who suffer from shame-proneness and experience irrational shame may become excessively focused on themselves and fail to notice the needs of others, but this does not apply to someone with a healthy sense of shame. Although in the short term, an episode of shame may lead one to focus inwards, in the long term it can contribute to developing our sensitivity to others’ feelings when it is occasioned by a lack of concern for someone (pp. 179-182). For instance, if Leroy’s friends make him feel ashamed of his neglect of them when he has a new girlfriend, the shame that he feels can lead him to become more sensitive to their needs in the future. In comparison with guilt, shame can even be seen as morally superior in some ways because it focuses on the self and self-improvement, rather than on the mere infringement of norms and how to repair them.

DRT recognise that the beauty of shame is ‘fragile’ and accept that it can be a dangerous force when the values that inform it are ugly, or when it is felt irrationally and chronically (pp. 183-184). Their ultimate assessment, however, is that shame is an important moral emotion. The account of shame they provide is subtle and convincing, but I have one concern that I outline in the following section.

### 2. Autonomy and values

My worry lies with what DRT describe as the ‘autonomy of shame’. In Chapter 5, the authors argue against accounts that see shame as heteronomous, where this is understood as the imposition of external standards on the subject of shame. According to their definition of shame, the values involved in a shame episode must be self-relevant, rather than imposed from the outside. They claim that if the values at stake are not shared by the subject, she is likely to feel anger or disgust rather than shame. Let us apply this to a version of *office*, call it *office2*, where I care not a jot about my reputation among my colleagues. DRT say I am likely to feel annoyed with my colleagues if they laugh at me for shopping in a discount supermarket, rather than ashamed of myself. For DRT, it is the fact that a subject subscribes, even peripherally, to the value at stake, that makes it correct to call an episode ‘shame’; in *office2*,I care neither about the status associated with discount supermarkets nor about my reputation.

The difficulty lies with how DRT understand the role that caring about one’s reputation can play in shame and, consequently, how they draw the distinction between the autonomy and heteronomy of shame. On DRT’s account, there are two possible versions of *office*: the one I originally described, where I feel shame because I care about my reputation among my colleagues and I do not want them to think less of me for shopping in a discount supermarket (although I do not agree with their views on this); and *office2*, where I do not care about my reputation and thus do not feel shame. However, neither of these explanations fit the way I felt in *office*, which was much more conflicted. It felt to me as if, for a short time, I did care about where I shopped and valued things in the way my colleagues did, something that was reversed when I got home and spoke to my partner.

Gabriele Taylor’s distinction between ‘false shame’ and ‘genuine shame’, which is not mentioned by DRT, is helpful here. Taylor claims that we can suffer from false shame, when we briefly ‘let an alien standard be imposed’ on us.[[6]](#footnote-6) Genuine shame, according to Taylor, occurs when one betrays one’s own values.[[7]](#footnote-7) In *office*, Taylor could describe my emotion as false shame because I could be interpreted as temporarily taking on ‘alien’ standards, which I then denounce once I return home to my partner. I am concerned about my reputation with my colleagues and this concern leads me to temporarily value what they value: social status as conveyed by money.

What Taylor captures with her conception of false shame is the fact that there are many occasions where concern for our reputation makes us conflicted about our values and sometimes leads us to temporarily assume values that we later renounce. DRT recognise that we often value our reputations and that this provokes shame in many cases, but we can use Taylor’s distinction to give a more detailed explanation that brings out how caring about our reputations can threaten our autonomy.

To understand why I am conflicted in *office*,we must note that I care about my reputation among my colleagues, but that I disagree with my colleagues’ assessments of the status associated with shopping in discount supermarkets. I am aware that their values differ from mine in this instance and I aim to uphold my own. This is not easy for me, however, because I still share their values regarding many other issues. For anyone who has followed a standard developmental path and has a fairly typical emotional sensitivity, what other people think of them is extremely important. Thanks to a combination of our biological make-up and socialization processes, we care deeply about the opinions of others. This is generally a good thing, but sometimes we want to resist the tide and rebel against a dominant point of view. In *office*, the dominant point of view, reinforced strongly through powerful cultural forces such as advertising, is that spending more money on food, or on any purchase, confers a person with a higher status. Thus while I usually care what my colleagues think, I struggle *not* to care in this particular instance because I am making a conscious effort to rebel against the cultural tide and construct my own values. I am not always entirely successful, however, which is why I am conflicted and feel what Taylor would call false shame.[[8]](#footnote-8)

DRT see only two options available for an account of shame: either one argues that shame is always heteronomous or that it is always autonomous (p. 128). They do not explain why they dismiss a third option, which is that the autonomy of shame comes in degrees; it is sometimes autonomous – when the values are fully the subject’s own -, sometimes heteronomous - when the subject takes on the values of others temporarily because she cares about her reputation - and can be any one of a number of shades that fall between the two poles. This option is the best suited to cover complex but common cases, such as *office*,where a subject is influenced by the opinions of others and struggles over what she really does value.

DRT’s description of the case of a schoolgirl, Milena, who feels shame because she is ridiculed by her schoolmates for her foreign accent and clothes, illustrates the problem with their insistence on the autonomy of shame:

*On any reading of Milena’s case, the verdict must also be that shame is autonomous. Perhaps Milena takes the judgements of her schoolmates to be authoritative on the issue at hand. She may lack a definitive view on the appropriate sartorial standards and simply be ready to accept their negative judgements. There is nothing heteronomous in deferring this way to the judgements of others whom we regard as experts, however. Alternatively, she may feel shame because she perceives her reputation among her new schoolmates, something she does value, as threatened. In these kinds of cases, it is not the actual contents of the judgements that are relevant; it is only their consequences for reputation that matter.* (p. 130)

There *is* something heteronomous about Milena deferring to the judgements of her schoolmates when she does this, not because they are experts, but because she cares about her reputation with them. DRT do not recognise the connection between caring about one’s reputation among others and partially submitting to their judgements about one and thus to their values. This submission may only be temporary, but at the moment when one feels shame one takes on the values that inform others’ judgements of one.

Imagine that Milena feels shame because she temporarily feels that it is terribly important that she should dress and sound as her schoolmates do. When she arrives home, her mother may remind her that she should not care about this, that she should be proud to be different and not care about what others think of her. In the safety of home, she is able to return to her genuine values, which involve a commitment *not* to care about her reputation in cases where she does not agree with the judgements of others. This, as I showed with my discussion of *value*, is not always an easy commitment to uphold and can often result in conflict because of our deeply social nature.

Another way to see this is to think of engagement with values as something that comes in degrees. Discussion of thick concepts, that is, concepts that have both evaluative and descriptive content, such as ‘cruel’, ‘kind’, ‘trendy’ or ‘unfashionable’, can be helpful for thinking of how we can be more or less committed to values that we can readily identify.[[9]](#footnote-9) Adrian Moore argues that we can grasp thick concepts in an “engaged” or ”disengaged” way.[[10]](#footnote-10) Full engagement, according to Moore, requires not only being able to apply the concept correctly and being willing to do so, but also “sharing whatever beliefs, concerns, and values give application of the concept its point”.[[11]](#footnote-11) Peter Goldie further connects the idea of engagement with a thick concept to our emotional responses so that full engagement with the concept of ‘unfashionable’ would require that one is disposed to feel shame when one thinks that one is not dressing fashionably.[[12]](#footnote-12)

We could think of Milena’s case in terms of how engaged she is with the thick concepts her schoolmates apply to her, such as ‘unfashionable’, ‘foreign’ (where this includes a negative evaluation). Milena is not usually fully engaged with these concepts, although she understands them and can recognise cases where they apply. Yet her concern for her reputation and the social pressure she faces at school push her to engage with them more fully for a temporary period, when she experiences false shame, in Taylor’s terminology. Similarly, in *office*, I am not usually fully emotionally engaged with the concept of ‘cheap’, where this implies trying to save money by shopping at discount supermarkets, but I am pushed towards a fuller engagement with it by my concern for my reputation. These cases of temporary pushes towards full engagement are best described as instances of shame that is partially heteronomous.

Adam Morton provides a different way of thinking about the same issue in the context of his discussion of shame.[[13]](#footnote-13) He proposes two different kinds of shame, an emotion he sees as part of a family of meta-emotions; these meta-emotions involve imagining a different perspective towards which one feels a particular emotion, imagining an emotion directed towards one from that perspective, and then feeling an emotion about the whole imagined emotional scenario. The different kinds of shame involve different perspectives towards which we feel different emotions. One type of shame involves me imagining myself the object of contempt from a timeless (possibly objective or moral) perspective, towards which I feel respect. This kind of shame is contrasted with a feeling of self-respect and I would describe it as an autonomous kind of shame; it is similar to the shame I feel in *home*. Another type of shame involves me imagining myself the object of contempt from the perspective of actual other people. This type of shame is contrasted with self-esteem and I would describe it as a heteronomous kind of shame. DRT recognise that the first kind of shame is morally relevant, while the second kind is not, but they claim that both kinds are autonomous.

DRT argue that cases of shame like Milena’s and *office* are instances of autonomous shame because the value at stake is something that the subject cares about, her reputation. I agree that the subjects in these cases have a concern for their reputation and that, to this extent, their shame does involve a degree of autonomy. The crux is that we miss central aspects of cases like Milena’s or *office* if we say that they are simply cases where the subject cares about her reputation and thus experiences autonomous shame. We miss the important phenomenon, which Taylor calls false shame, of concern for one’s reputation causing one to temporarily take on different values, or experience a value conflict. DRT can insist that once the values are taken on, even if only temporarily, they become self-relevant and thus autonomous, but I think this misses the point. It is helpful to describe cases like this as partially heteronomous because this acknowledges the strong social pressure that can be exerted on any subject who cares about her reputation.

The point I have raised is something that could easily be addressed, leaving the rest of DRT’s account of shame intact. They would simply need to weaken their claim that shame is always autonomous to the claim that shame is autonomous to varying degrees. We can be engaged with values to varying degrees and this engagement can depend on situations in which we find ourselves. Shame can be partially heteronomous when the value involved is concern for one’s reputation and this leads one to temporarily engage more fully with the values of those around one, which are sometimes in direct conflict with other values one holds. Acknowledging that shame can be autonomous to varying degrees does not damage the potential shame holds as a morally relevant and important emotion, as carefully outlined by DRT. It is simply recognition that we often struggle not to be influenced by those around us and our shame experiences reflect that.

### Concluding remarks: relevance for contemporary issues

Aside from the applications discussed in the final two chapters of the book, there are at least two – and probably many more - contemporary moral and political issues for which a thorough analysis of shame of the kind DRT provide is highly relevant: the first is the relationship between inequality and poor health outcomes; the second is the question of conscientious refusals in health care.

How does shame relate to inequality? In *Value*, my shame was acute partly because the U.K. is a highly unequal society and divisions between people on different incomes are highly visible, particularly in London. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett in *The Spirit Level* appeal to some of the empirical literature discussed by DRT on shame.[[14]](#footnote-14) They argue that people experience shame more frequently in unequal societies and that this is one of the factors that explains the higher rate of mental health problems and violence (particularly in young men) in unequal societies. As we have seen, DRT provide useful tools for interpreting the results of empirical literature on shame and their analysis will thus be helpful for thinking further about what kind of mechanism is at work in unequal societies and whether it is shame, shame-proneness or other emotions, such as feelings of humiliation, that play a causal role in mental health problems.

The link between shame and conscience is clear; both involve values that one holds and self-evaluation. The question of conscience protection for health professionals is one of increasing prominence in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Australia, Italy, Spain and elsewhere. This issue is closely connected to access to abortion and contraception because these are the services that are most often objected to on conscientious grounds by health professionals. A proper analysis of shame is important for understanding what a professional means when she says that her conscience will not let live with herself if she performs an action. The distinctions drawn by DRT between shame and guilt prove particularly useful for a fuller appreciation of what is involved in a conscientious refusal in health care and in other domains.

With their account of shame, the authors have provided us with a finely-honed tool that draws on philosophical and empirical insights and is well-suited for use in contemporary political and moral debates. My only recommendation is that they allow for degrees of engagement with values, degrees of autonomy of shame and thus for a more detailed picture of the social pressure involved when we care about what others think of us.

1. Taylor, G. 1985. *Pride, Shame and Guilt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The other difference between DRT’s account and Taylor’s is discussed in Chapter 5. Taylor argues that shame always involves the taking of an external perspective on oneself, whereas DRT think that this, although common, is not a necessary part of shame. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For a review: Tangney, J.P., Stuewig, J. & Mashek, D.J. 2007. What is Moral about the Self-conscious Emotions? In: J.L. Tracy, R.W. Robins & J.P. Tangney, eds. *The Self-conscious Emotions: Theory and Research*. New York: The Guildford Press, pp. 21-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For example: Gilbert, P. 2003. Evolution, Social Roles, and the Differences in Shame and Guilt. *Social Research*, 70(4), pp. 1205-1230. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Fessler, D. 2004. Shame in Two Cultures: Implications for Evolutionary Approaches. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 4(2), pp. 207-262. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Taylor, G. 1995. Shame, Integrity, and Self-respect. In Robin S. Dillon, ed. *Dignity, character, and self-respect*. New York: Routledge, pp. 157-78 (p. 163). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid. (p. 169). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. My criticism of DRT echoes Jennifer Manion’s criticism of Taylor. Manion claims that Taylor’s distinction between genuine and false shame is not adequate to explain cases where the values that a person holds appear to be her own – and thus provoke genuine shame according to Taylor - but have been so heavily shaped by her society’s conception of gender roles that they are not conducive to her own well-being (2003. Girls Blush, Sometimes: Gender, Moral Agency, and the Problem of Shame. *Hypatia*, 18 (3), pp. 21-41). Manion is right to highlight the gendered nature of shame, something that neither DRT nor Taylor mention. However, Taylor’s account of false and genuine shame at least admits the possibility of momentarily taking on values that are not fully one’s own, whereas DRT’s account is less sensitive to the way in which the values of others exert pressure on a person. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The term ‘thick concepts’ was coined by Bernard Williams (Williams, B. 1985/2007. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, London; New York: Routledge, pp. 128-30, 140-6 see also Williams, B. 1965/1973. Morality and the emotions. In *Problems of the Self* (pp. 207-229). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Moore, A. 2006. Maxims and thick ethical concepts. *Ratio (new series), 19*, pp. 129-47. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid. p. 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Goldie, P. 2009. Thick concepts and emotion. In D. Callcut (ed.), *Reading Bernard Williams.* London; New York: Routledge, pp. 94-109 (p. 96-99). See also FitzGerald, C. & Goldie, P. 2012. Thick concepts and their role in moral psychology. In R. Langdon & C. Mackensie, eds. *Emotions, Imagination, and Moral Reasoning*. New York: Psychology Press, pp. 219-236. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Morton, A. 2013 (forthcoming). *Emotions and Imagination*. Polity Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Wilkinson, R. & Pickett, K. 2010. *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*. London: Penguin [↑](#footnote-ref-14)